

STATE OF MARYLAND

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Dear Fellow Marylander:

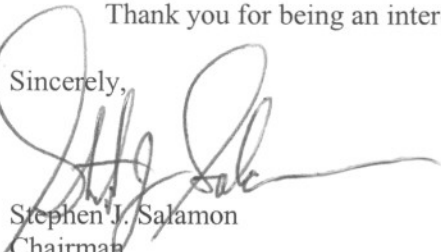
The Maryland Health Care Commission (MHCC) and the Health Services Cost Review Commission (HSCRC) are pleased to release jointly this latest version of the Maryland Hospital Performance Evaluation Guide (Guide). The Guide, updated every six months, contains descriptive information and data on the use of hospital services, as well as quality of care information for specific medical conditions. In addition, the Guide provides a resource for consumers when making important health care decisions about hospitals.

The Governor and the Maryland General Assembly charged the Commission with developing and implementing a system to comparatively evaluate to evaluate and compare quality of care outcomes and performance measures for hospitals on an objective basis. With input from a steering committee comprised of consumers, hospital representatives, data experts, and the Delmarva Foundation (under contract with MHCC), the latest Guide not only continues to provide consumers with a resource for evaluating area hospitals, but also allows hospitals to evaluate how they compare to their peers. The Guide also includes valuable consumer information on hospital treatment of patients who experience heart attacks, heart failure, and pneumonia, conditions that affect many persons in Maryland. Additionally, consumers can compare obstetric services in hospitals throughout the state. The Guide continues to evolve and will address additional subjects in the future.

Although we are confident that you will find this Guide useful, we appreciate constructive input from those who visit our website. After reviewing the information that we have offered in our Guide, we would appreciate it if you would provide us with your comments and suggestions by clicking the "Contact Us" button at the bottom of the homepage.

Thank you for being an interested and better-informed health care consumer.

Sincerely,


Stephen J. Salamon
Chairman
Maryland Health Care Commission


Irvin W. Kues
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Health Services Cost Review Commission